

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-17 are pending. Claim 1 is amended. Claims 16 and 17 are added. Claims 1 and 16 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in the Office Action in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Claim for Priority

The Examiner has recognized Applicants' claim for foreign priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document. No additional action is required at this time.

Acknowledgement of Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner has acknowledged receipt of the Information Disclosure Statement filed September 6, 2000, and has returned an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449. No further action is necessary at this time.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-4 and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Spector (U.S. 6,017,049) in view of O'Neill, Jr. (U.S. 6,069,588); claims 5-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Spector in view of O'Neill, Jr. and in further view of Higuchi et al. (U.S. 5,839,0550; and claims 9, 10, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Spector in view of O'Neill, Jr. and in further view of Ishibashi (U.S. 6,111,964). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the rejections, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 1 is amended herein to recite a radio communication system having a combination of elements, including a repeating apparatus having a mute function and attenuates or interrupts when a sound source having a higher priority order and another sound source having a lower priority order interfere with each other.

In addition, independent claim 16 is added to recite a combination of elements in a radio communication system for a vehicle, including a radio communication apparatus mounted on at least one helmet to be worn by a passenger of the vehicle and including at least a speaker, a microphone and a radio wave transmitter-receiver; and a repeating apparatus mounted on the vehicle side for wireless communication with the radio wave transmitter-receiver, the radio communication apparatus being mounted on the helmet communicating with a second helmet through the repeating apparatus, wherein the repeating apparatus repeats mutual communication between two radio communication apparatus mounted on each of the two helmets worn by passengers of the vehicle and a radio communication apparatus mounted on a third helmet worn by a person other than the passengers of the vehicle, wherein the repeating apparatus includes a mixing section for combining signals received from two or more radio communication apparatuses, and a mix/mute section for mixing sound signals outputted from the mixing section, a portable telephone set, and a music reproduction apparatus, and providing an output transmission signal.

Full support for the novel limitations set forth in independent claim 1 can be found in the specification, for example, in the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 14. See also FIG. 5.

Full support for the novel limitations set forth in independent claim 16 can be found in the specification, for example, in the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 3. See also FIG. 5.

It is respectfully submitted that the combinations of elements set forth in independent claims 1 and 16 are not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Spector, O'Neill, Jr., Higushi et al., or Ishibashi.

Each of these documents is silent regarding a repeating apparatus having a mute function that attenuates or interrupts when a sound source having a higher priority and another sound source having a lower priority interferes with each other, as set forth in independent claim 1, and a mixing section 742 for combining signals received from two or more the radio communication apparatuses 73, and a mix/mute section 743 for mixing sound signals outputted from the mixing section 742, a portable telephone set 81, and a music reproduction apparatus 83, and providing an output transmission signal.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the cited references, taken alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the novel combination of elements recited in independent claims 1 and 16 of the present application. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 16, as well as the claims depending therefrom, are in condition for allowance; and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are, therefore, respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

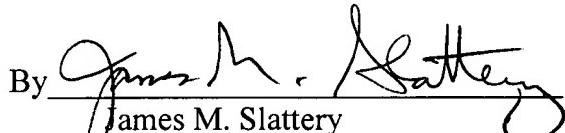
Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, she is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. **(Amended)** A radio communication system for a vehicle comprising:

a radio communication apparatus mounted on at least one helmet to be worn by a passenger of said vehicle and including at least a speaker, a microphone and a radio wave transmitter-receiver; and

a repeating apparatus mounted on said vehicle side for communicating with said radio wave transmitter-receiver[;], said radio communication apparatus mounted on said helmet communicating with a second helmet through said repeating apparatus,

wherein the repeating apparatus includes a mute function and attenuates or interrupts when a sound source having a higher priority order and another sound source having a lower priority order interfere with each other.

Claims 16 and 17 have been added.